

REMARKS

Claims 17-19, 22-24, 36-38 and 40-42 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 17-19 and 22-24 are amended. The amendments introduce no new matter. Claims 1-16, 20, 21, 25-35 and 39 are canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited in those claims. Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116(b)(1) since the amendments cancel rejected claims, and rewrite claims that recite allowable subject matter in independent form based on the indication of allowability in the current Office Action. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the Final Rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action, in paragraph 6, indicates that claims 17-19, 22-24, 36-38 and 40-42 recite allowable subject matter. Specifically, the Office Action indicates that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants appreciate this indication of allowability. Applicants were concerned, however, that despite this indication of allowability, on pages 5 and 6 of the Office Action, claims 17-19 and 22-24 are discussed in a rejection of other pending claims. Applicants' representative confirmed with the Examiner, in a February 21 telephone call, that the claims are allowable and the failure to remove the narrative on pages 5 and 6 of the Office Action was an error. Based on the foregoing, amendments to the claims are undertaken in view of the indication of allowability. Specifically, claims 17-19 and 22-24 are amended to independent form.

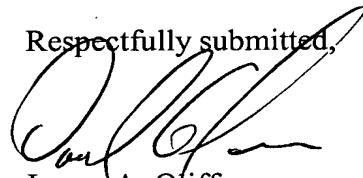
The Office Action, in paragraph 4, rejects claims 1-5, 7-16, 20, 21, 25-35 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,725,460 to Nishiyama et al. (hereinafter "Nisiyama"). The Office Action, in paragraph 5, rejects claim 6 under 35

U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishiyama in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,874,018 to Wu. The cancellation of claims 1-16, 20, 21, 25-35 and 39 renders these rejections moot.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the indicated allowable claims 17-19, 22-24, 36-38 and 40-42 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:DAT

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